



# CONGRESSMAN HENRY A. WAXMAN NEWS

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## WAXMAN STEPS UP EFFORTS IN WAR AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM

Working in cooperation with New York Congressman Hamilton Fish, Jr., and Los Angeles Congresswoman Bobbi Fiedler, Rep. Henry A. Waxman (D-Los Angeles) has broadened his efforts to bring the federal government into cases of anti-Semitic violence and vandalism.

A bill authored by Waxman and Fish is aimed especially at apprehending burglars who steal sacred Torah scrolls and the silver ritual ornaments displayed on those scrolls.

Waxman said,

"In just the last few months more than two dozen Torah scrolls have been stolen in the New York area. The New York Police have little chance of regaining the scrolls or apprehending the criminals. Knowledgeable sources say the scrolls are likely to be smuggled to Israel for re-sale or peddled to growing Jewish communities in the South and West. To cope with this problem we need the help of the FBI, the U.S. Customs Service and local authorities across the country. It is clearly a federal matter."

Waxman estimated the market value of Torah scrolls at over \$15,000 each. He emphasized that many Torahs have enormous historical and emotional value — especially those saved from the Holocaust.

The Waxman-sponsored bill initiated by Rep. Fiedler would make vandalism motivated by hate — such as painting of swastikas, burning of crosses or the inscription of bigoted slogans a federal offense punishable by up to a \$25,000 fine, two years imprisonment, or both.

Waxman expressed strong belief that Congress would support a crackdown on perpetrators of anti-Semitic crimes.

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